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NAVY review(s)
completed.

7301577

From: Director of Naval Intelligence
Commander, Naval Intelligence Command

To: Gen Walters.

1. Attached is self-explanatory and FYI.
2. It is, in my opinion, another example of uncoordinated dissemination which has little depth in substance but which has far reaching implications.
3. Example: Adm Harty at the UN has asked for my analysis of the CIA Weekly Review item, which in his opinion (and mine) leaves the policy maker with a distorted view of the actual situation.

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IN REPLY REFER TO

8 March 1973

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Dear Bruce,

(S) I am becoming increasingly concerned over the analytical bias which has, over the past year, crept into some CIA unilaterally-produced articles regarding the Soviet Navy. Even though this is probably more a reflection of the relative inexperience of new CIA maritime analysts than agency policy, it is resulting in the wide dissemination of a number of articles which base the analysis on a single narrow factor and do a disservice to the reader by drawing major conclusions thereon rather than putting the single factor in proper perspective. Thus, in many respects, it appears that the preconceived conclusion is driving the selection of data and supporting rationale rather than the reverse.

(S) One of the most frequently misused single factors is a tonnage comparison between Soviet and U. S. shipbuilding which is increasingly finding its way into CIA products. Tonnage is an exceedingly important factor but not in itself. It must be considered along with many other factors which are in many respects far more significant than tonnage alone. I attempted to make this concern known last June when I forwarded my letter serial 0011531P942 in response to your Intelligence Memorandum, "Soviet Defense Policy, 1962-1972". Even though I considered the treatise on tonnage of the shipbuilding section of that document to be poorly presented, I believe that the article; "USSR: Naval Shipping" on page 9 of the 2/3/73 CIA Weekly Review, even more objectionable. Again, the major, if not only, factor considered was tonnage and little if any weight was given to numbers, capabilities to carry out assigned missions, firepower, or differing requirements for large ships. The article concludes with the statements that the Soviet shipbuilding program is--"...modest, much less than U.S.; the USSR remains well behind the U.S. in overall effort given to naval shipbuilding". Yet, there is a paradoxical statement, stated in the negative and buried in paragraph 2, that the Soviets have built about twice as many ships during the last five years as the U.S.

(S) Just as a purely numerical comparison is unjustified threat-building, recent CIA articles which treat tonnage comparisons in isolation lead the reader into a false sense of complacency unless properly caveated. It is not the accuracy of the data which is being challenged but the use of an extremely narrow base upon which to derive, or strongly infer, major conclusions. If this series of articles is intended to balance other articles slanted in favor of Soviet accomplishments, they are guilty of the same error in analysis but to the other extreme.

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(S) Another example of the type of CIA reporting that is causing my increased concern recently appeared in the Strategic Research Monthly Review [redacted] page 3, titled, "Soviet Naval Deployments Level Off in the Seventies". The subject matter of this article, very similar to the tonnage issue, appears to be driven by editorial bias rather than a desire to present a balanced treatment of the subject.

(S) Here again, gross figures are used in isolation rather than looking deeper into what factors drove those figures. In essence, the CIA article combines all Soviet out-of-area ship days to arrive at the conclusion that deployments have leveled off in the seventies. This is believed to not only do a disservice to the reader but to be so biased as to be inaccurate. As pointed out in the Navy input to NIE 11-10-73, "Soviet Policy and Military Posture in Third World Areas", the trend line in Soviet naval out-of-area ship days from 1965 through 1972 undertaken to increase Moscow's influence in the Third World has not only not leveled off -- it has continued to increase. A number of anomalies have occurred which have affected gross Soviet out-of-area ship day figures but they have been confined to abnormalities in exercise activities caused by international confrontations between U.S. and Soviet forces and not to any shift in Moscow's policy regarding Soviet naval expansion in distant areas.

(S) In 1970, the Soviets conducted Exercise OKEAN -- the largest exercise ever conducted (over 200 ships of which 45 were submarines). This exercise was conducted worldwide and caused the 1970 ship day figures to be abnormally inflated. Conversely, in 1971, only the Soviet Pacific Fleet held a major exercise, while in 1972, there was no Soviet major open-ocean exercise by any of the four fleets. This was due in part to the Soviet naval reaction to the India-Pakistan War of 1971 and their reaction to the U.S. mining of North Vietnamese ports in the Spring of 1972; however, these did not compensate and the figures are believed to be considerably depressed. Admittedly, in the Mediterranean, Soviet naval forces appear to have reached the total number (about 50) considered necessary by the Soviets to accomplish their assigned mission. This is particularly relevant when considering reductions in the U.S. SIXTH Fleet from about 50 units in the late 1960's to their current level of between 30 and 40.

(S) Thus, the CIA analysis, which develops a major conclusion by comparing 1972, a year in which there was no major Soviet out-of-area exercise, against 1970, a year in which the Soviets conducted the largest naval exercise in their history, is considered invalid for purposes of developing a trend for Soviet distant area deployments undertaken to project Soviet influence. This prime judgment will remain submerged to both the analyst and the reader until Soviet exercise ship days are subtracted from the gross totals at which time the true nature of Soviet distant area deployments becomes evident.

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(S) In summary, the analysis conducted, and upon which these articles were based, is cause for concern and deserving of attention. The use of graphs and charts filled with statistical data is impressive but unless tempered with balance and factors which do not readily lend themselves to mathematical quantification, the results are often misleading. Thus, I believe that it is incumbent upon both of us to insure that individual drafters do not extend an analysis beyond the reasonable limits of the data researched. There is always the desire to author the article that portends the revelation or disproves the accepted but the true value of such work stems more often from the efforts of the editor than the labors of the reporter.

Sincerely,



E. F. RECTANUS
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy

Mr. Bruce Clarke
Director, Strategic Research
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

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10 JUN 1972

Mr. Bruce Clarke, Jr.
Director, Strategic Research
Central Intelligence Agency

Dear Mr. Clarke:

(S) The Chief of Naval Operations and I received and reviewed with considerable interest your Intelligence Memorandum; "Soviet Defense Policy, 1962-1972". Basically, we found it to be a very fine product and of considerable use to us in some of our on-going projects.

(S) There is one area, however, that I consider quite weak and which contains a conceptual error. The area is ship-building which is treated on pages 14 and 15 of your IM. Considering all there is to say about comparative ship-building programs within the U.S. and USSR; i.e., past construction rates, current programs, and shipbuilding yards and capacities, the text concentrates almost entirely on tonnage comparisons. The statement is made that, "...The only major area in which they have surpassed the U.S. is in numbers of attack submarines..." The main problem with this statement is in the word numbers which misleads the reader away from the tonnage factor to one of a numerical comparison. The chart on page 15 then illustrates that the Soviets out-produced the U.S. in major surface combatants 92 to 83, attack submarines 117 to 42, and -- had the POLNOCNY class LSM the Soviets had built in Poland been included -- in amphibious ships 72 to 45. I am convinced that there are other significant conclusions to draw from this comparison than mere displacement.

(S) Tonnage comparisons, such as contained in the IM, are extremely misleading and in this case, as well as others, this over-concentration on a relatively minor factor tends to divert attention from primary factors such as firepower, speed and seaworthiness which are considered better measures of combat capabilities. It must be kept in mind that Soviet naval missions are different than ours, thus, the composition of their fleet as well as the design of their unit differs.

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This is not to say that because their ships differ in design concepts they are less capable of accomplishing their assigned missions -- which in the final analysis is the only criterion of importance.

(S) In order to place proper emphasis where I believe it belongs, i.e., capabilities vice numbers or tonnage, I have enclosed a number of charts which I feel may be of value to your analysts. The point is that the introduction of a relatively small number of C and P classes of SSGNs more than compensates for the retirement of medium range W class SS. In major combatants, a few KRIVAK DDGSP far exceed the combat capabilities of a large number of SKORYYs; and, in minor combatants, the introduction of the SAM configured GRISHA and dual-armed (SAM and SSM) NANUCHKA are technologically advanced platforms which should not be categorized either in numbers or tonnage with the gun and torpedo boats of the 1950s.

(S) It may appear that I am belaboring a minor point in the IM; however, I sincerely believe that there is a trend developing which concentrates on a relatively easy comparison factor -- that of tonnage -- and excludes an extremely complicated but more meaningful comparison of capabilities and qualitative characteristics in direct relation to assigned mission.

E.F. RECTANUS
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Director of Naval Intelligence

Encl (1):
Soviet Naval Trend Charts (10)

CLASSIFIED BY: OP-942F
EXEMPT FROM GDS OF EO 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY: 7.A. (2)
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Typed by: P. DeMauro 6/9/72

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USSR: NAVAL SHIPBUILDING

During the past decade, the dynamic growth in Soviet naval operations world-wide, plus the introduction of several new weapons systems, has given the impression of a greatly expanded naval shipbuilding effort. In reality, the over-all rate of expansion in naval shipbuilding has been modest—much less than US expansion during the same period.

In most cases—submarines being the main exception—the Soviet Union continues to lag behind the US. Although the Soviets built about twice as many ships in the past five years, for example, the US produced over twice the total tonnage.

As a result of the emphasis upon ballistic submarine construction, the Soviets built over three times the submarine tonnage the US built during the past five years. The tonnage for attack submarines built during the same period shows little difference. A comparison of tonnages built in other categories of ships shows that the US maintains a lead in major surface combatants, amphibious ships, and major auxiliaries. Although the Soviets are ahead in the construction of minor combatants, these ships make up only a small portion of the over-all effort. If the major and minor combatant categories are combined, the US still has a lead.

The data also show the US effort on general purpose ships more than doubled in the last ten years, while the Soviet effort decreased by approximately 15 percent. In the 1963-67 period the USSR built approximately 84 percent as much general purpose tonnage as the US. In the 1968-72 period Soviet construction fell to about 34 percent of the US level.

The fact that the USSR has devoted less effort to naval ship construction does not mean that the Soviet program has not contributed to Soviet naval capabilities. The construction of a series of modern missile-armed surface ships and submarines, for example, has significantly increased the effectiveness of Soviet naval forces. Nevertheless, the USSR remains well behind the US in the over-all effort given to naval shipbuilding.

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Total Tonnage by Categories of Ships*
(thousands of tons)

Ballistic Missile Submarines	US	USSR	Ratio US:USSR	% Soviet/US
1963-67	235	—	—	0%
1968-72	—	218	—	0%
Attack Submarines				
1963-67	57	254	1:4.5	448%
1968-72	112	126	1:1.1	112%
Major Surface Combatants				
1963-67	306	128	1:0.4	42%
1968-72	283	152	1:0.5	54%
Minor Surface Combatants				
1963-67	9	72	1:8	205%
1968-72	11	69	1:6	616%
Major Amphibious Ships				
1963-67	167	45	1:0.3	27%
1968-72	512	56	1:0.1	11%
Major Naval Auxiliaries				
1963-67	240	105	1:0.4	44%
1968-72	595	108	1:0.2	18%
TOTAL				
1963-67**	1,014	604		
1968-72**	1,513	729		

*The figures cover all types of submarines, surface combatants over 100 tons displacement, and the major types of amphibious ships and naval auxiliaries.

**Based on full-load displacement for surface ships and surface displacement for submarines.

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* U.S. Navy cannot have said to have expanded, when the fleet has dropped 30% in total numbers.

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USSR - Eastern Europe**7301577****Soviet Naval Deployments Level Off in the Seventies**

The levels of Soviet general purpose naval deployments have stabilized over the past two years, suggesting that the rapid expansion in Soviet naval operations characteristic of the late Sixties may be over. This trend may reflect current constraints on resources allocated to the Soviet Navy for routine operations.

In each of the major operating areas of the world except the Indian Ocean, the pace of Soviet naval activity, measured in ship operating days, has been nearly constant or declining for the past two years. (See chart, next page.) Soviet activity in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, Caribbean, and West African areas has been relatively constant for two years. Activity in the Pacific Ocean has shown a decline owing primarily to decreases in attack submarine and auxiliary ship operations. In Indian Ocean operations—exclusive of special harbor clearing activity in Bangladesh—the rise from 3,150 ship-days in 1971 to 4,630 in 1972 was a consequence of the augmentation of Soviet forces in that area by 10 ships during the India-Pakistan war. Soviet naval units engaged in the harbor clearing work in Bangladesh—primarily small coastal minesweepers and diving support craft—expended roughly 2,500 ship-days in 1972.

The worldwide level of Soviet general purpose naval activity outside home waters has been relatively stable (about one percent growth) since 1970 if the foreign aid related activity in Bangladesh is excluded. The stability in naval activity levels in the past two years is surprising.

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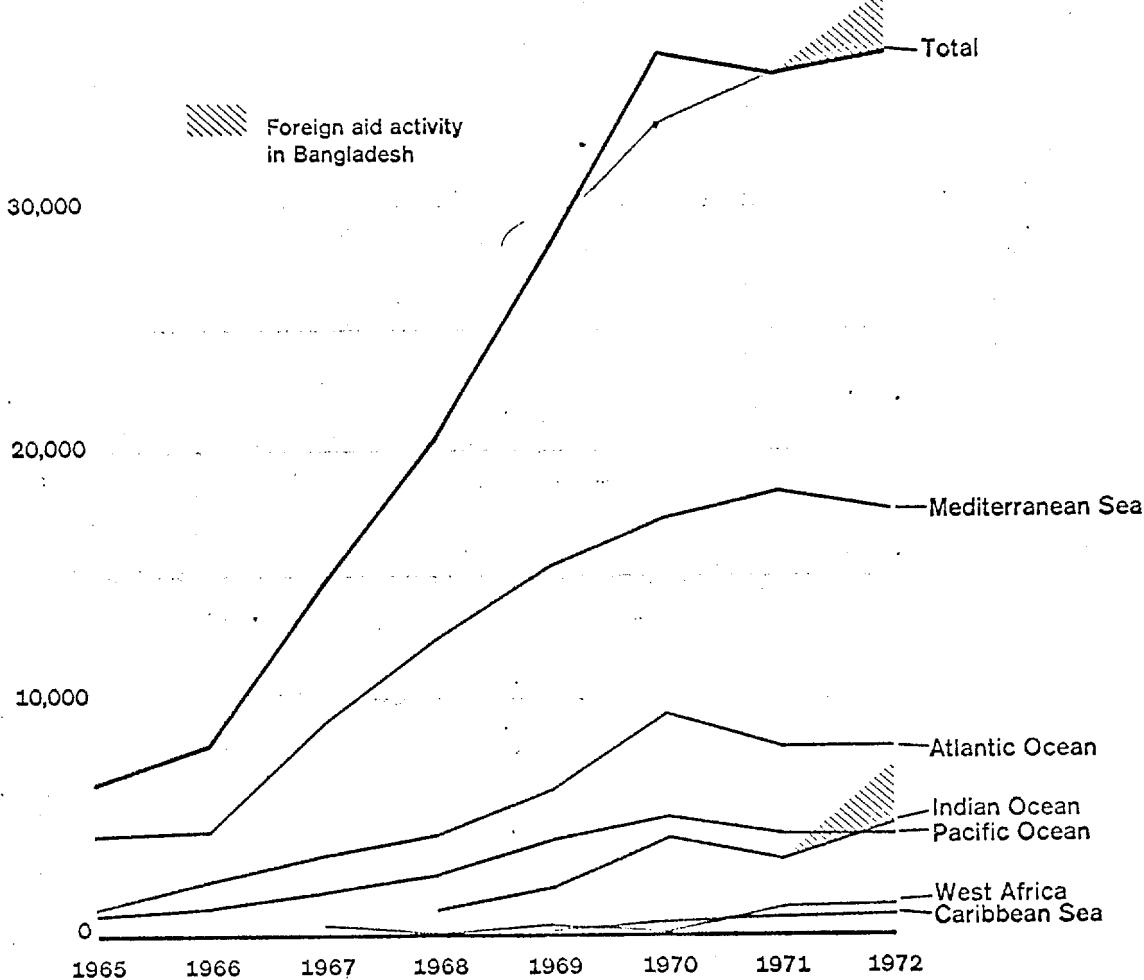
The leveling off in Soviet deployments thus far in the Seventies presents a contrast to the latter half of the Sixties, when operations of the Soviet Navy's general purpose units rose at an average rate of 42 percent per year. The increase in annual ship-day totals from about 6,270 in 1965 to 35,880 in 1970 reflects the growth of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, particularly after the Arab-Israeli war in 1967, the initiation of operations in the Indian Ocean, and increased exercise activity worldwide. "Exercise Ocean" alone involved over 200 ships in 1970.

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**Operations of Soviet General Purpose Naval Forces,*
1965-1972**

Ship-days
40,000



*Excludes ballistic missile submarine, hydrographic research,
and space support ship activity.

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The factors underlying the stabilization in general purpose force operations since 1970 may include tradeoffs between strategic and general purpose force operations and resource constraints on routine deployments. Total Soviet attack submarine operations have dropped more than 500 ship-days since 1970, whereas ballistic missile submarine deployment time rose approximately 760 days, reflecting a possible tradeoff of submarine operating resources.

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The absence of major exercises in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans during 1972 could reflect these economic restrictions.

TO: _____

DATE: _____

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